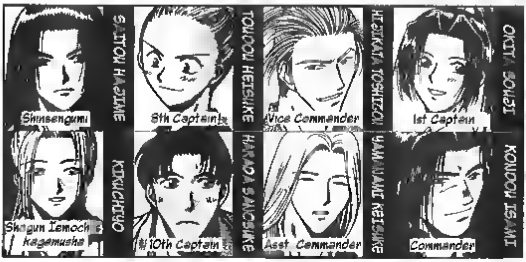
The Law of the Sword - Part One

For whatever reasons, we've all come to live in Kyoto
Shintokuji Temple, Mibu Kyoto
Our true purpose here is not to protect the Shogun
We'll be the first to rid this country of foreigners!
We will immediately return to Edo to strengthen our defense against the foreign devils!
However, this wasn't the welcome we had hoped for
WHAT!?

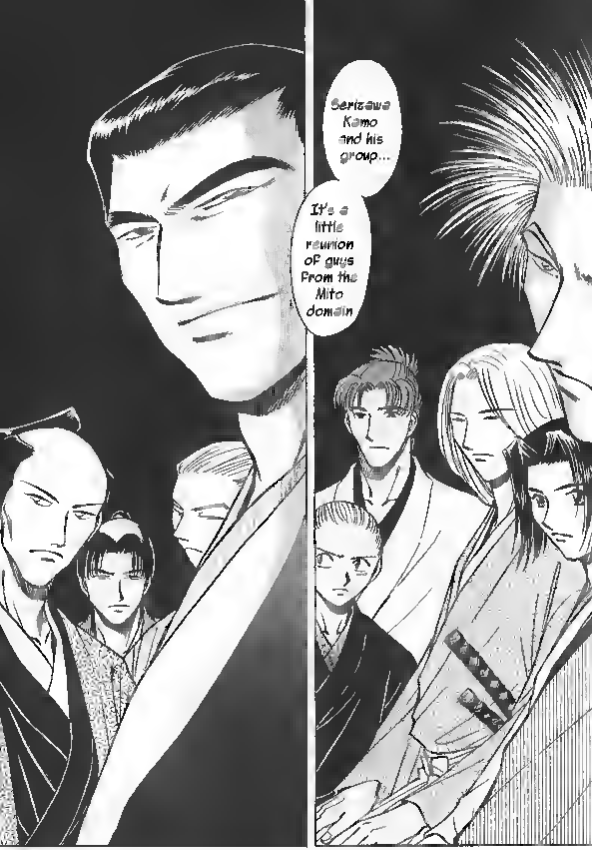
The shogun was pressured by foreigners to open Japan to trade. Many saw the foreigners as hostile invaders and the shogun as a weak leader.

Calm down, Okita
The world was more complex than we had thought

I'm sure some of you have your doubts
But do consider our situation


OKITA SOUJI
1st Captain
HIJIKATA TOSHIZO
Vice Commander
TOUDOU HEISUKE
8th Captain
SAITOU HAJIME
Shinsengumi
KONDOU ISAMI
Commander
HAMANAKE KEISUKE
Asst Commander
HARADA SANOSUKE
10th Captain
KIMURA
Shogun Iemoch 6 kagemusha

But there's no way I would go with him
It looks like almost everyone left with Kiyokawa
Does he think we would betray our Shogun to join a bunch of traitors and terrorists?
Heh
I told you those guys seemed suspicious
But there's some very interesting fellows left now
Inoue-san, Nagakura-san, please forgive me as well
Oh no, he fooled us too
We fell for it
Toshi-san... Forgive me


Serizawa Kamo and his group...
It's a little reunion of guys from the Mito domain

Well, now that Kiyokawa is out of the picture, we can't just sit around here on our asses
Meet them?!
But since they too were left behind, wouldn't one think they might be like us?
Are we supposed to be happy to have them?
Let's meet them and see
Kondou-san, maybe only you should go
Is this really okay...?
If the rest of us went we might upset the locals Nagakura seems pretty streetwise around here
Yeah

Hijikata-san
For the time being, let's set up head-quarters here
Good relations with Serizawa could lead to us getting assistance from the Mito clan
Asking directly would be a faux pas
Personally, I can't stand him He was controlling things on the trip here... toying with people
But there's not much we can do about it, so what the hell

Why are you always sulking?
Why do you say that?
I guess it's that Saitou-kun ditched us...
I thought we were all in this together
Besides, I have my own things to worry about
UWAH!
Hyiketa-san!
What was that for?!
Listen to me!
Let go! Everyone else is leaving!

This isn't your fault! That Kiyokawa was a slick bastard and he played us all!
We all came to Kyoto by our own will, and we won't go!
We didn't just stay because of your issues, so it's not your fault. Got it?
Yeah
Good answer
Shouldn't we hurry to catch up to everyone else?
Uh oh

Well, I'm glad it hasn't hurt your appetite
I DON'T BELIEVE IT! How did we get lost?!
Do you really not know where they went?
No idea
Well, are you coming?
We'll go look for them, right?
And go sight-seeing!

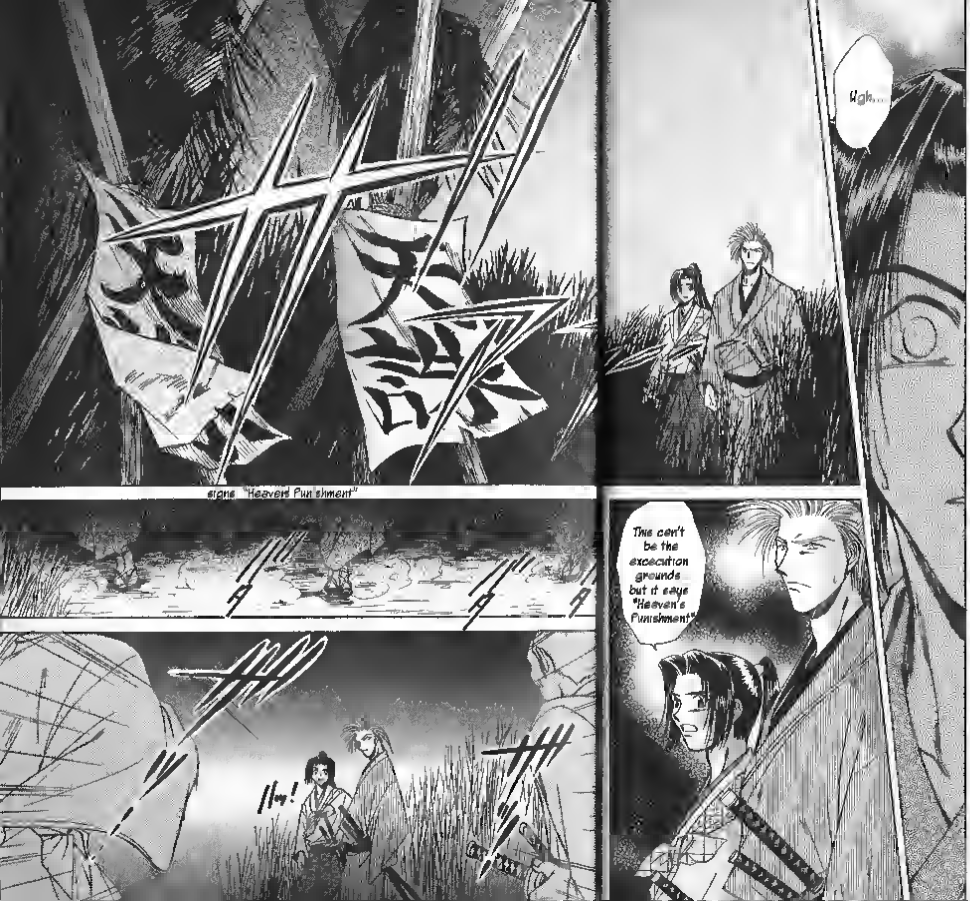
Watch out!
Kyoto is much more crowded and cramped than Edo
I guess it's not what we had in mind
We arrived in Kyoto a few days ago, but it looks like we're gonna be stuck out in the boondocks in Mibu. Boooring!
Hyakata-sen!

Compared to the Kamo River, the dry streambed back home in Tama is so tiny...
Shouldn't we start looking for an inn?
You think so?
Yeah, yeah, tomorrow
Since we all left from there, maybe someone knows where they went
But today has been so much fun...
And nights in Kyoto are so long
First thing tomorrow morning, I'm going back to Shintokuji Temple

Hijikata-san...
Just for a little while...
Mmm, I was just a little cold
Well then this enough for us-
You know why I left Edo? Because we all had to sleep in one big room
We could have stayed at an inn!
But in a cheap inn you've got to share a room

I'm so glad he came...
If he left me alone, I was thinking that I'd track him down myself.
It just would have been that pain[v]
If he's with me...
Then I feel like I can do anything.

Hmm...
Hijikata-san, I think I saw someone
SFX. "grass rustle"
A shadow over there
Stay here and don't move
Hijikata-san!
SFX. "something moving in grass"
Shit


signs "Heaven's Punishment"
Ugh...
This is not a place for the living
This can't be the execution grounds but it says "Heaven's Punishment"
Hm!

So you thought you could creep back in the dead of night to retrieve your friends' severed heads!
What? Why...?
There they are! Dogs of the shogunate!
Don't even try to escape!
Please wait! We just got lost!!
We'll kill all you pathetic, foreigner-loving dogs of the military!!
The Ishin Shishi were a terrorist group. (At RK, Kenshin was a member)
Well, talking to these guys is useless.
So, I guess you're the extremist idiots of the Shishi?

We'll show you Heaven's Punishment right here!
You've got balls, brat!
Hijikata-san! Just hit them with the back of your sword!
Okay, now I'm angry
ドッ!

What ignorant assholes!
You think you can hand out heaven's wrath?!
I'll help you!

Hijikata-san! Let them go!
You bastards! Stop!
Fuck! It was a setup!
It's your fault they got away! You'd better have a good excuse!
Please don't be angry I was just trying to find you
Well, I found you
Actually, we're in Mibu with the Yagi family
Well we were on our way to the Mito HQ!
YOU WERE SO LOST YOU DIDN'T KNOW WHERE WE WERE!!
Hijikata-san

What happened to you?
Waah, it's good to be back!
Oh no, it's alright
I'm so sorry to have worried you!
Thank goodness you're alright
You mean if they say yes, then...
!!?..
Actually, while you two were out, we went ahead and decided without you - we've submitted a petition to Matsudaira-sama, the Aizu clan chief, for us to become the official guardian force of Kyoto.
The what?
We want to patrol the city and the outskirts of town while the Shogun is in the capital

Oh, so I guess you found your lost children
Yes - we'd be doing what we came here to do
Youre not very good at looking after your babies, Kondou-dono
Time to put the kids to bed-

Several days later
We recieved your petition the other day
Matsudaira Katamori-sama read it himself
Given the turbulent state of the city, we invite you to accept your duty
...That Matsudaira is one classy guy
Crap... this is all so high-class that I'm going crazy...

I have great hopes
The Roshigumi remaining in Mibu are at your service, Matsudaira-sama
You will be advised by Nomura here
Yes sir!
Yes sir!

Anyone there? We brought your stuff!
I'M COM-ING!!
Cool! And now for the uni-forms!
We can't go around patrolling without them!
I wanna be the best dressed guy in Kyoto
Please control yourself
Our Flag!!
...re they here yet?

ワイ
ワイ
Is there one for me too?
Blue?! We're going to look so gay!
THEY'RE NOT BLACK!! I wanted black!!
That guy is our commanding officer?
You surprised me! You should have told me you were coming back!
Why did you leave us back at Shintoku Temple?
Hajime!
It's okay, it's okay!!
I'm sorry

Yamanami-san
Kiyokawa was assassinated in Edo
!!?
I'll go tell Kondou-san
Saitou-kun... you didn't...
No...
Is it true? You killed that guy?

That's not like you to say
Well, there's a lot of guys in Kyoto who could use killing, too
Hei-suke
We're doing a good job with our duties here

Serizawa, Niimi and Isami became commanders, with me and Yamanami right under them Everybody else became an officer and our troops grew

Each and every squad guarded the city honorably

If the Shogun (Kikuchiyo) went to Osaka, we went too, when he returned, we were here

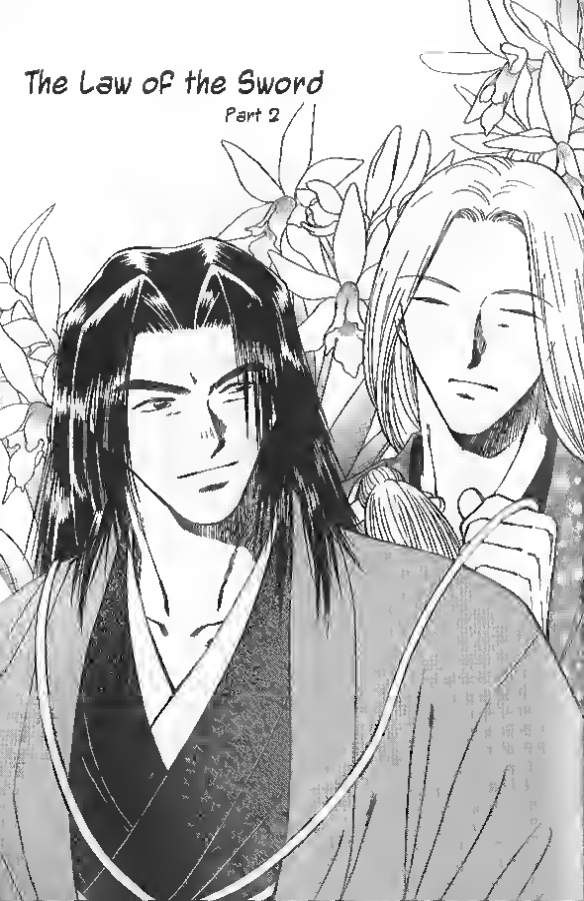
Dangerous ronin thought twice before getting involved with us

We really felt like we were making a difference

And so we began to understand a bit of the world's complexity.
There was a scandal...
Wasn't this a brilliant plan?!
This is Fun!

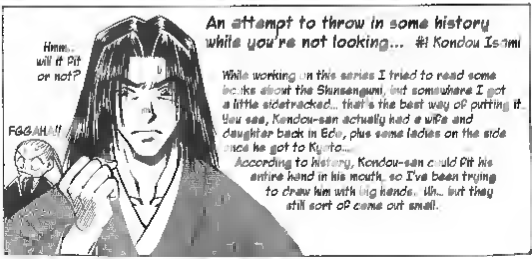
The Law of the Sword

Part 2



How cruel
Why here?
Che!
Those Mibu Roshi are devils!
Landlady-san, it's no use!
I have to!

You think we don't know that you were handing money for enemy ronin from Futai?! Are you trying to bullshit us?!
Were you planning to fight us off with rocks and sticks?!
Shut up!
But I never did anything to you!



An attempt to throw in some history while you're not looking... #1 Kondou Isami

While working on this series I tried to read some books about the Shinsengumi, but somewhere I got a little sidetracked... that's the best way of putting it. You see, Kondou-san actually had a wife and daughter back in Edo, plus some ladies on the side once he got to Kyoto...

According to history, Kondou-san could fit his entire hand in his mouth, so I've been trying to draw him with big hands. Uh... but they still sort of come out small.

I can't stop the fire over here!
Don't get in the way!
SFX "surprise"
SOMEJI!
SFX "slam"
You stop too! This is official government business!

SFX: *grab*
No, Toudou-kun! You can't kill another member of the Mibu Roshigumi!
But he...
That bastard!!
That's no way
Do you want Kondou-san to have to kill himself in shame?!

That's right...
I have to cool my feelings
It's just like the third day after we left Edo

You would have me camp outdoors!
It's cold, so I thought I'd burn some-thing
But I've now rendied an inn - won't you rest?
I apologise for my oversight in preparing your room
Kondou-san..
Saheving this way over a simple mistake is a disgrace to all samurai!!
Yama-nami!
Are you listening to me?!
But by burning such a large fire right here, you're endangering all the neighboring houses!
How can you do this?!
I won't let you force people from their homes!!

Please..
Let's just end this
Kondou-san!!
Don't let the houses catch fire! Bring water!
We need some here!
This is what we get for entrusting things to someone as naive as Isami. How could he forget to book an inn for Serizawa?!

It's no use, you two
Inoue-san!
This will strain even Kondou-kun's self-control
SFX: *tension*

Alright, I'm bored now Take me to my room
What, you need a hand?
You can take care of the fire
Kondou-san

トン
トン
Whatever
Will the room at the end of the hall on the second floor be alright, sir?
Please follow me
SFX: "Footsteps"
Go away, brat
SFX: "angry grunt"
I'm Toudou Heisuke!!
Apologise to Isami!!

Kondou Isami!!
Isami?
I'm not going to let that slide...
Oh yeah...
Isami is a better man than you in every way!
You're pretty pathetic to call yourself his student
Wait!
But I'm tired. Get out of here

You're annoying
Bastard!!!

Nice ass
You'll shut up if you know what's good for you
WHAT THE FUCK?!

I didn't get a chance to buy a whore, so I think I'll relieve myself with you
You fucking bastard!
WHAT?!
And you're drunk!
You're heavy!
Fuck you!
Get off of me!

Please, Sensei!!
Let me go! Please, stop!!
Ah
Ah...
Why do I have to be quiet?!
Sensei, no...

TOUDOU-KUN!!
NO!!!
AHH!

Toudou-kun, get a grip!
I was just having some fun and he lost it

That little brat screams just like a girl

Toudou-kun... stand up...
SFX: Trembling

SFX "glare"
キッ!
Toudou... kun...
SFX "shutting door"

I wonder if I'll get the chance to kill him one day...
Your eyes are so dark...
You
SFX "surprise"
SFX "wig"

That man...
If only he weren't here...
SFX: *ki...ck*
Kondou-san!
What am I thinking?!
Okita!

Nomura, what shall we do about them?
SFX: "snap"
I'm asking you to put out that fire
But... Kondou-san
Whatever it takes.

About the Mibu Roshigumi?
First, let's change the name... "Shinsengumi" sounds better
As you wish
As for their behavior keep an eye on them
Yes sir

* "Roshigumi" = ronin group
"Shinsengumi" = newly selected group

What's more, the Osaka Police are involved as well - Serizawa killed one of their famous sumo wrestlers
The Kyoto public is outraged
The Yamatoya silk shop that was burned down the other day had no connection to the radicals
But the public is too frightened to speak
Ordinarily, we would be feeling the pressure of threats from other merchants

So, Nomura-

I thought I had the Roshigumi situation under control...

But I don't want to disband them...
Do you see how it is?

Matsudaira-sama?
I was mistaken
I could use a man like Kondou Isami
There's not a trace of evil intentions in his eyes
Not like this, of course
But sir...

Has no need for two heads.
One body

Hey! Don't do that around here!

But there are so many people!
Show off some of your cool sword skills, Souji!
But it's probably better to leave that kind of crap Yamanami!
Since Kondou-san is out, it's your responsibility to make sure everything goes smoothly
Huh?
Today we're being inspected to see if we're fit to guard the city!
This morning, Kondou-san went to meet someone... the palanquin they sent was so fancy I wonder who it was?
Leave me alone!
You should come too!
What?
What?!
Oh, that was from that Matsudeira-guy

Probably so punks like you and me don't disgrace ourselves in the palace
Without Sanzawa-san... Why would he only want Kondou-san?
Who knows?
But why only Kondou-san?
I'm just messing with ya!
Don't say that, it's bad luck!
Kondou-san...

I want you to kill Serizawa
You are not to speak of this
Yes sir
.....

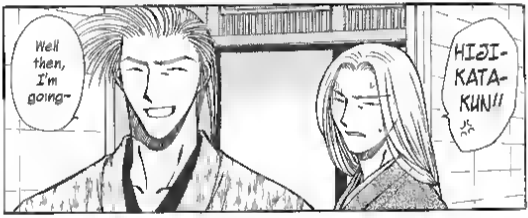
The Law
of the Swo
Part 3

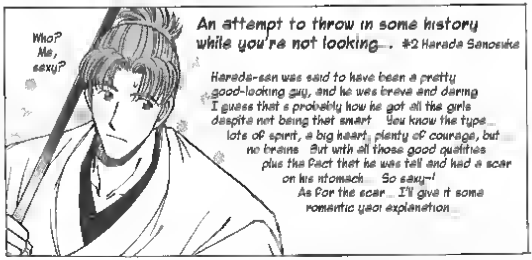
Kondou-san is late...
So?
I told you some time ago that Nomura-dono had left
If he is attacked by imperial loyalists like the Shishi
Yeah? Who cares?
Even so...

Yes, it would

I'll go get Okita so you don't have to call the police It would be a pain in the ass if he got killed

Heh You can make Isami blush You're an interesting guy


Well then, I'm going-
HIJI-KATA-KUN!!


Who? Me, sexy?
An attempt to throw in some history while you're not looking... #2 Harada Sanosuke
Harada-san was said to have been a pretty good-looking guy, and he was brave and daring I guess that's probably how he got all the girls despite not being that smart You know the type... lots of spirit, a big heart, plenty of courage, but no brains But with all those good qualities plus the fact that he was tall and had a scar on his stomach... So sexy~! As for the scar... I'll give it some romantic yaoi explanation...

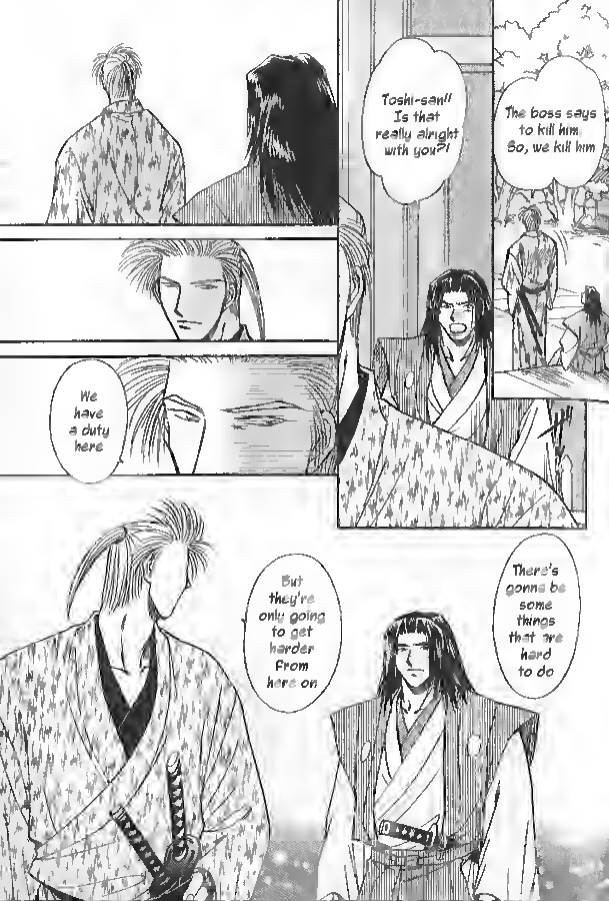
Oh?
WAH! It's Hijikata!
You kids wore me out!
Me next!
What?!
Man... He's such an old fart! He sucks!
waah!
waah!
HIJI-KATA!
kya!
wait!
HIJI-KATA!
eep!
What did you do to those kids?!

Only because they said they were friends of Okita's!
You're getting all buddy-buddy with them!
Those brats? You know I'm not as soft as you
Well he's just a big kid himself
So, why'd you finally decide to show up?
I was asked to kill Serizawa-san
Umm...

Yes
Matsudaira said that?
There are many things about Serizawa that I don't like, but we are technically comrades fighting for the same goals
Well, maybe not... I'm just trying to do my best...
Really?
I don't see how you're the same
What do I think?
No, Matsudaira
Who, Serizawa-san?
Isami, what do you think about him?

That man is our "master"
Well because of the lord of Aizu.. And the Kyoto Guard
Our Shinsengumi has become a part of the shogunate.
Yeah..
So that means

We're real samurai now
I...
Am I right?
That means that when he's got a problem, we fix it


Toshi-san!! Is that really alright with you?!
The boss says to kill him. So, we kill him
We have a duty here
But they're only going to get harder from here on
There's gonna be some things that are hard to do

I'm happy with my life here I'm having a good time
What about you?
I don't know...
I...

Kondou-san!
I found you!
Thank goodness!
Did I worry you? I'm sorry
Oh no, I just get worked up over nothing
Alright
Fine, ignore me!
Let's go - Yamanami-san will be relieved to see you

So do you think it was a good choice to come to Kyoto Okita?
Even though we've had so many problems?
It's been okay!
Yes!
Do you like being in the Shinsengumi?
Yes!!
Is that so? That's good, then
What was that all about?
Er... I'm sorry
Hah Hah Hah

He's partying at the Sumiya again
September 18, 1863
キッ
If something happens to me, you kill him
Just in case
He'll spend the night there with his mistress
Don't let Is-mi do it
Right

It's alright But neither Kondou-san nor myself has any desire to kill
If I lost him...
But I knew that you were the only one I could ask
But there's no way that could happen
Such dark eyes...
I shouldn't have gotten you involved in this

I want you...
Wait until we get back
Giggle
Right!
Oh really?
I can wait!
Then let's go

A palanquin would cost too much, so I'll just return in the morning

Oume? Are you asleep? Get up!

Besides, Oume is waiting for me.
ｶﾀｯ

ｶﾀｯ

You...

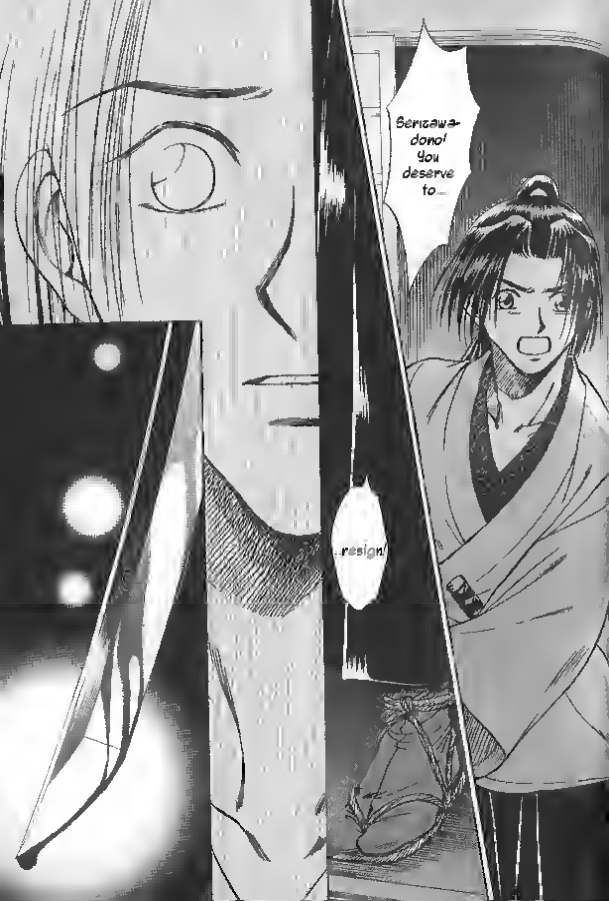
So you came to kill me, brat?
You hate me that much?
You must be mad because I felt you up

You...
You creep!
He's fast!

Crap—
Oooh, now we're close-
It's stupid for a weak fighter to flaunt his weakness and forget to keep a safe distance from his opponent
You're too inexperienced

ギラ…
ゴリ
It's so quiet... maybe he already left
Yeah, maybe

Wait, I'm going to go check it out
If he's not there
Should we go back to the palanquin rental shop, then?
But...
Oki...
I'm not going to let you get away with this!! I'll stop you!


Serizawa-dono! You deserve to...
...resign!

Saitou
k
kun

SFX "surprise"
Holy shit...
Toudou-kun!!
He's just unconscious.

I killed Serizawa, Hiroyama and a woman...
I had personal reasons
When you kill someone, you die on the inside...

Don't forget that
Wait...!!

Well then, please arrange reparations for the proper people. We'll have a magnificent funeral, and I'll lead the way.
Yes, sir.
Is that so?
I'm here to report that Serizawa of the Shinsengumi was killed last night during a break-in at the Yagi residence.
If there's such a thing as a man soaked in evil intentions, then I am the genuine article.
Nothing, nothing at all.
What are you saying?

Hey! Anybody home?
What's this?
The extra uniforms you ordered
They're mine! I ordered them!
Huh? No one told me about an extra uniform order...
SFX: "running"
You can't be the only one in a different uniform!
Hey! Hajime! Try this on!
SFX: "fall down"
This one is for Saitou!
Well duh!
Oh gods Saitou-kun too...
Taadaa!! White mountains on a black background - it looks SO MUCH COOLER
Oh yeah!

Saitou-kun... Thank you...
Blue looks good on you
Hey, why didn't you guys get one for me too?
Hijikata-san, you too?! This defeats the purpose of having a uniform!
Hmm, you're right...

Yeah, we got you a plain white one with black trim
KON-DOU-SAN?!
Hijikata-san!!
Hey, can I have one too?
Get off of me!
I'm sorry, blue was just too flashy for me
What's going on?
Somehow... it feels like we're back at Shieikan
Kondou-san, as the commander you can't just...

No matter what happens to the rest of the world, I hope we'll always stay like this
So we'll be able to enjoy whatever comes
END

Never to
Return

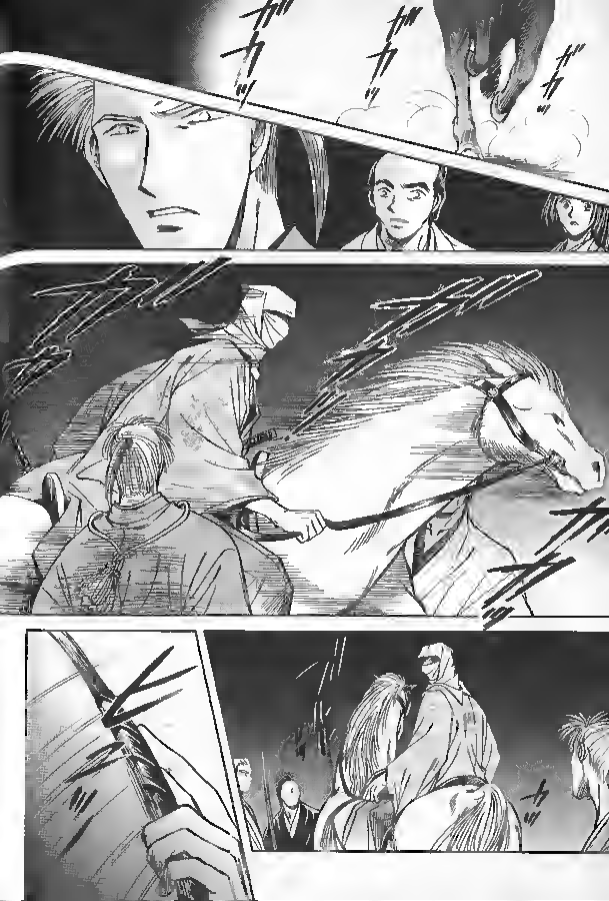
Guess you didn't know I was the Hijikata Toshizo, did ya?
Still gonna kill me?
Hey, dumb asses!
The moon is pretty bright tonight, huh?

An attempt to throw in some history while you're not looking... #2 Toudou Heisuke

Another pretty boy ? Were the Shinsengum really such a bunch of hotties?
Well there's a theory out there that Heisuke was really the illegitimate child of a nobleman So maybe he'll grow to look like that unfamiliar guy to the left? (Appealing, but no) Even though my Heisuke is totally lacking in style and refinement I think with a bit of work on his manners he'd make a fine man

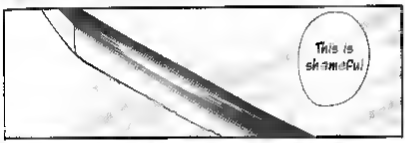
As in the First Unit Captain...?
Hi, I'm Okita Souji!
Fuck, another one!
KILL HIM!!
HH HH HH...

I don't want to kill them...
Ha ha ha
The Shinsengumi don't have the balls to kill us!
Are you really using that beat-up old sword?!
Hijikata-san!!
Fuck! Why am I fighting them with a shitty wakizashi?!



So, had enough yet?
Gah!
Get out of here!!
Run away!

ブルル…
Hijikata-san!!
Are you okay?!


This is shameful!

Yeah, yeah, I'm, uh, getting mine sharpened I thought that sword would be okay as a loaner

Absol-utely not!
Well, it's not!

Hijikata-dono, a man in your position can't carry such a disgrace for his weapon!
You're right

Ooch, gotcha!
Er... well... that's...
Hey, I know! You can lend me your Famous "Kotetsu" sword!
How's that sound?
What's the big deal? Yamanami in my case, and you too, Isami?
Yeah, that old Nomura dude is coming!
Um what?
3rd, 8th and 10th units just got back from patrol
But Hijikata-san, you really could have been hurt last night...
Yes if that man in the white hood hadn't shown up when he did
SFX: "approaching footsteps"

Come on in!
Nomura?
Oh no, forgive us!!
I'm sorry to bother you...
Nomura-dono!!
This is a private request, not government business
If you have an assigment for us, we are at your service
Yes... Last night, he saved Hijikata and Okita from a dangerous situation
The public has been gossping about the man in the white hood
Look at this

I want you to capture the man in the white hood, unharmed.
Is he a dangerous ronin?
It will be difficult to capture him unharmed
No, he's not a ronin
Shall I just dispose of him?
YOU WILL NOT!!!
Saitou-kun!!
I bet he's that Matsu-daira

Is this true?
Huh?!
WHAT?!
So you see why I want him unharmed
Yes
I begged him not to go, for his own safety...
It's just not appropriate for a man of his status to be joyriding around on a horse late at night!
But why like this...?

I'm begging you!!
I thought that if he were publicly apprehended by the Shinsengumi, he wouldn't try this stunt again!
What a waste of time! You think we're not totally capable of protecting him no matter what he wears?
Toshi-san!
Hiji-kata-san!!

Hijikata-san?
Yeah, come in
Should I get a new one?
Nomura-san left
Oh? Good
How did you know that the man last night was Matsudaira-sama?
Hmm Well...

He had the eyes of someone used to looking down on people I knew it had to be him
Um— Okay
Wow, this looks really beaten up I guess you've had it since when we were in Edo
Yeah
Well, someone doesn't like me killing people
Hyikata-san, don't use me as an excuse
Fine! Maybe I just have a hard time forgetting about the killing!
I know how you feel
smile

But through everything, you've always been there to save me
試蘭仙
When you're the only one I want
It's not like I can go have fun with a girl...
You don't want me?
No, not here!

You only think about playing!
You're so immature!
Even if the sex is mind-blowingly good...
But that's not all I think about when I'm with you
But Hijikata-san
I think about home
And everything we've been through
And I think about you...

I want you to think about me more than anything else
I do
Like the first time we did this...
Hearing you talk of home brings back so many memories...
Oh...
Ah...
Ah...

We're turning into mushy romantics, you know?
Mm
I'm sorry to have gathered you all here
Yeah, like we can trust anything you say

Don't you hear the sound of hooves?

Shh!

Um... I...
Uh, why is the old guy here?

Hijikata-san, even you must be a little nervous!
Don't you trust us?
I'm afraid I'll get killed

SFX: "Fighting sounds"

Let's go!
Hijikata-san!

ヒヒーン
SFX: "Horse whinny"

SFX: "Horse whinny"
Wow! Harada has good ears!

What are you doing here, you old fart?!
I'm not an old fart!!
Oh, it was good of you to come
I was a bit out-numbered
You've saved me
They're probably all with the Shinengumi
Yeah, and the other guy looks familiar too
Isn't that Hijikata of the Shinsen-gumi?

I, Matsudaira Katamori, am responsible for protecting this city I order you to disperse!
Is this enough for you?
Quiet! We don't know him and we don't have any problem with him
Take off the mask!
I suppose you must see to understand

We'll be executed for sure!
But if he is the real thing, if we don't get rid of him, then...
How should I kn...w?
Is this guy for real?
Oh my, he sounds eloquent!
I have my orders!
Too bad

Heh I think your luck has run out!
SFX. "snap"
HIEI-KATA!

Got it!
This is the "Izuminokami Kanesada" Use it!!
Catch!

Kat.imori-sama!

Very well
I've had enough excitement
Please stop running around at night, sir...

That spiky-haired fellow was particularly interesting
He has a rebellious streak that is quite unlike Kondou
Ah, watch out, he'll take your job!
Katamori-sama!

Wow
Yup, he gave it to me as a gift
It's such a nice sword!
Are you sure you can keep it?
Oh, that's because I took it to a blacksmith this morning
Yeah, but how did he know I had a shitty, busted-up sword?
I mean, I was planning to get rid of that old thing, but now I can't find it
I'm not the same guy who was afraid to use a real sword
Well, anyway,
I think realised that when my old sword broke

I've got divided feelings even on this
But isn't that a good thing? Should I just get rid of the old one?
But I can't look back now
That's right none of us can afford to dwell on the past
But it's still something precious that we should hold on to
So don't throw away your old sword

Our thoughts of Shaikan are some of our most beautiful memories...

Even if we are stained with blood, they will always be pure...

I think I'm more mature than you are...

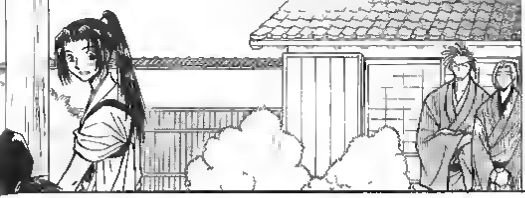
WHAT?!

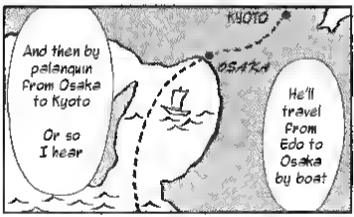
END

"I wander alone with a sack~"
Kikuchiyo is coming back.
"When I meet someone else we get out the sake cups~"
"When I meet someone I smile and laugh~"
He was sent back to Edo for a while, but he's finally returning to Kyoto!
"With Four Friends, all is good in the world~"

"With five, may it always be this way~"
I wonder if we'll see his escort as they go from Osaka to Kyoto?
"With seven friends nothing else matters~"
Ah, probably not but if I did have a chance to see him...
No way... it's hopeless he'd be inside a palanquin anyway...
SFX. "squeak"
"Kine will overflow the storehouse with riches~"
"Six, happy and healthy~"
"Eight of us will build a big house~"
SFX. "splash"

The Hill of Promises





An attempt to throw in some history while you're not looking... #4 Okita Souji

Everybody knows about Okita's illness...so you must be worried... I want him to have lived to be 100! And knowing that Hijikata just willingly gave up his life... For some reason it really bothers me! I can't just pretend that terrible things never happened... but I want to draw them when they could forget about illness and be happy My Okita is cheerfully oblivious!

I'm gonna go bother them!
Hijikata-kun...
Something's up with Souji
Hmm?
Why are you doing this shit? You too, Isami!
What do you think you're doing, Hijikata-san?!
Hey! Souji!
It feels great!!
Come on, Toshi-san! Don't you like to give your underwear a good scrub every once in a while?!

Look! You're getting in the way of the people who have laundry duty today!

You idiots! That's why we have the new recruits!

But
But

Yes sir!

Hey! There's work to be done here!!

GIVE ME THAT!

Do you two understand?!
Yeah
Uh huh
OKAY, WE GET IT! LET US GO!!
HIJIKATA-SAN, THAT HURTS!!

So
What
name are
you going
by these
days?
I'm
calling
myself
Saitou
Hajime
now
Saitou...

I see
Hmm
But it's best if "Saitou Hajime" disappears from this world
How did you..?
Forgive me
It was good of you to hush up that little affair of trying to abduct Kikuchiyo back in Edo
Still, you ought to abandon that name

Well?
What is your business here?
How unlike you to fuss over something so minor
Hajime ...
Saitou-kun!
Sai-tou
I want you to relieve Kikuchiyo from his service

I humbly beseech you
Oh?
One month later
Men of the imperial guard, you have done well
You may rest until tomorrow's departure for Nijo Castle
Shogun Iemochi has safely arrived at Fushimi Castle

Come with me
Huh? S-itou-kun?
Take this
SFX "swish"
Sai

MEET KIKUCH
AT THE
SOUTHWESTER
END OF
THE CASTLE
MOAT IN T
HOUR OF T
MONKEY
*5-6pm
SFX. "shoosh"
What's this?
SFX. "ar ride"
Hijikata-san!
Please give that back!!
I don't believe it...
SFX. "surprise"
This doesn't have anything to do with you!
Are you trying to hide something from us?!

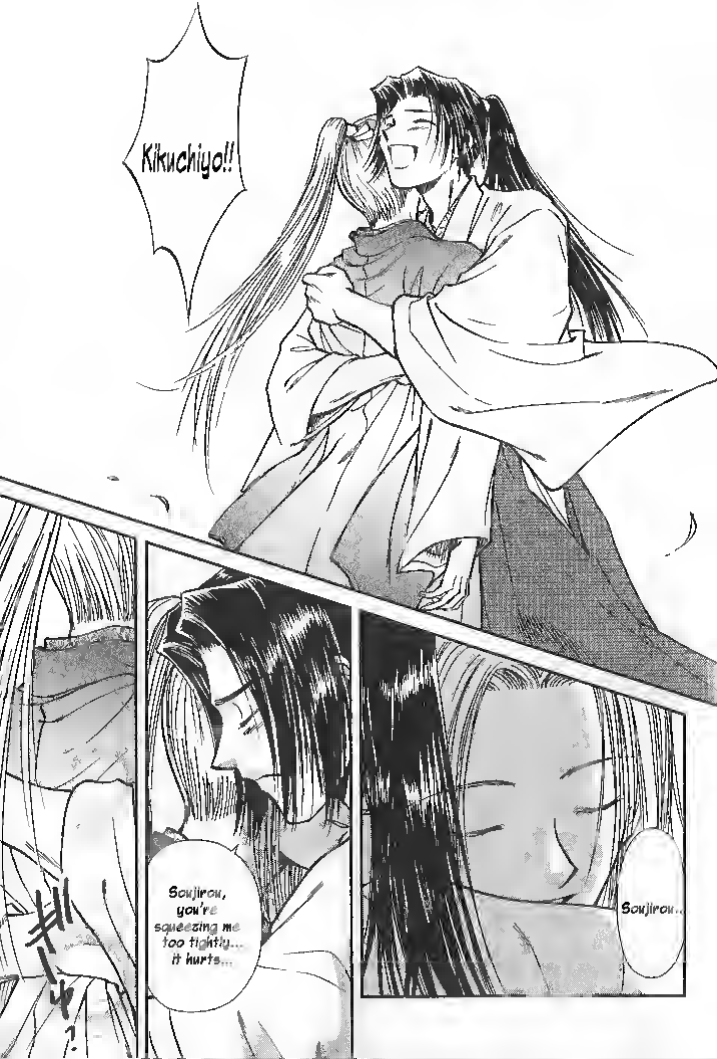
Stop!
But I have to see if it's true!
Kikuchiyo isn't your little friend anymore!
Yes it does!
I have no idea why Saitou-kun would want to speak to me privately!
SFX: "glare"

Ever since he became Iemochi's kagemusha, he's the one who dies in the shogun's place
I AM AWARE OF THAT FACT!!
Isami didn't know or care that the guy he guarded today was your precious friend!
You think we forgot everything we came here to do so quickly?!
I...
We're here for the shogun!!
I know, but I

Don't go!
Mm...
You're Okita Souji, First Unit Captain of the Shinsengumi!!

I...
I have to go!
That god-damned idiot...
I'm sorry!
Shit

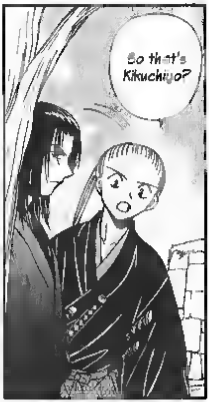
But now, Kikuchiyo has come back to me...
I thought I'd never see him again...
I know...
I know...
I'm not Soujirou anymore
SFX. "rustling grass"
SFX. "heavy breathing"


Kikuchiyo!!
Soujirou, you're squeezing me too tightly... it hurts...
Soujirou..

Yo!
Surprised to see me?
I was being too careless.
Heisuke what are you doing here?!
Sorry I snuck up and scared ya!

You've been talking to Okita, I see?

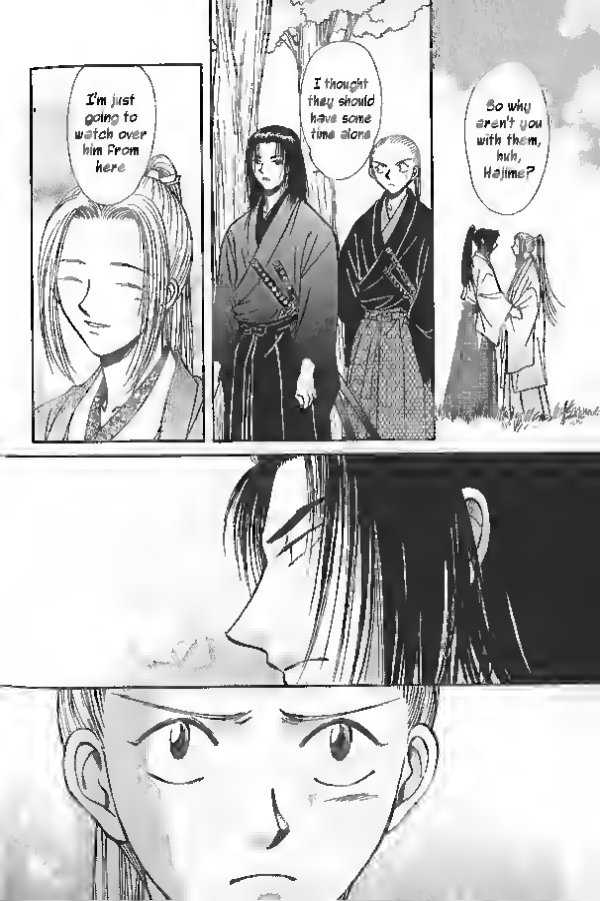
That time you came back to Shieikan all bloody... I found out about it then


So that's Kikuchiyo?

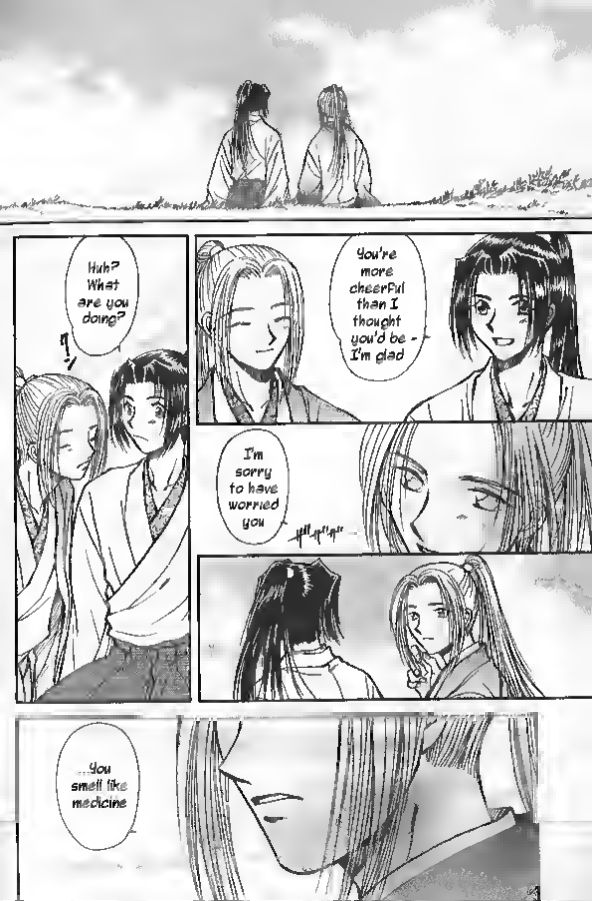
I see...

Nobody! Just me!
Must be a big secret!
Then who else knows?

Heisuke, you're a good person...


I'm just going to watch over him from here
I thought they should have some time alone
So why aren't you with them, huh, Hajime?

You just hang in there, buddy!
Wow, spoken like a true romantic!
WTF?!
Cheer up!
When you're done keeping watch, let's get something to eat!
Okay


Huh? What are you doing?
You're more cheerful than I thought you'd be - I'm glad
I'm sorry to have worried you
...You smell like medicine

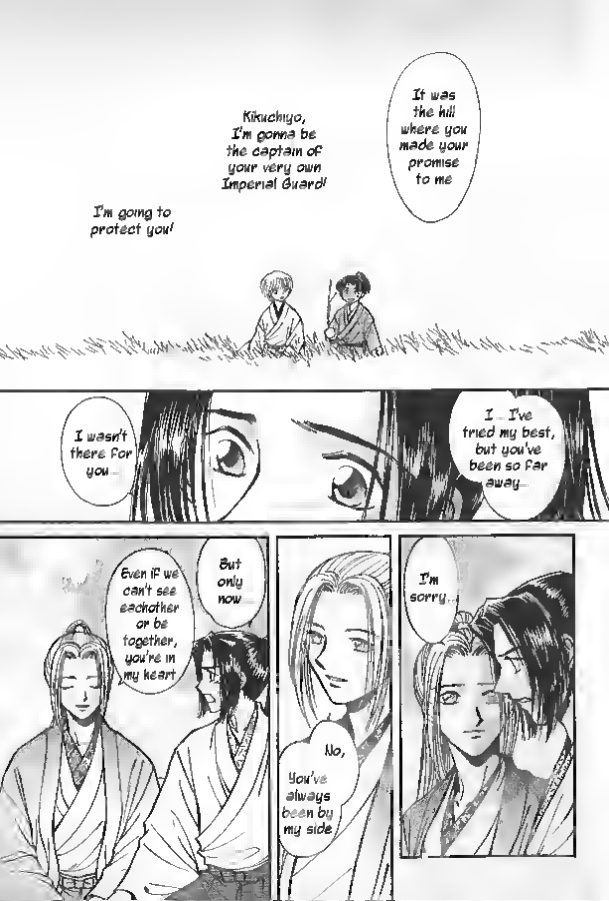
I don't notice anything!
It's a smell I'm very familiar with
I suppose so... since I am imbued with that smell
I don't have much time...
But you said you were okay...
Well you know best, then!
Your body is so frail
And your lungs have always been weak...

I don't notice anything!
It's a smell I'm very familiar with
I suppose so... since I am imbued with that smell
I don't have much time...
But you said you were okay...
Well you know best, then!
Your body is so frail
And your lungs have always been weak...
It's always been that way...

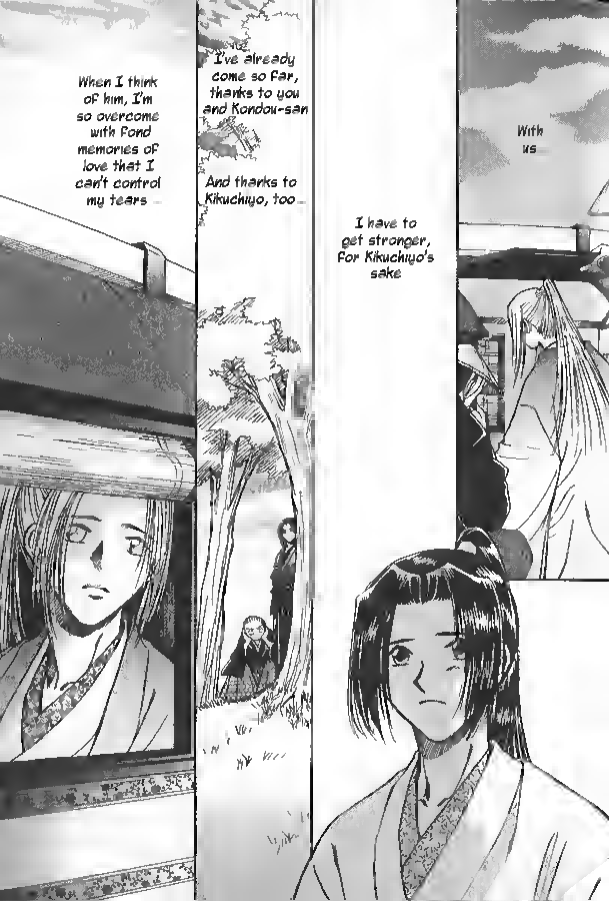
This place brings back memories.
Don't you feel the same way, Kikuchiyo?
Yes

It's amazing we weren't caught, sneaking around in broad daylight
Around the time that my name became "Kikuchiyo", you snuck me out of the house to go to a village Festival
It was so much fun...
For me too!
I haven't forgotten...

And the grass rustled in the wind...
The sounds of workmen hammering on a wooden scaffolding seemed like the music of an orchestra to me
It took my breath away to climb that hill


It was the hill where you made your promise to me
Kikuchiyo, I'm gonna be the captain of your very own Imperial Guard!
I'm going to protect you!
I wasn't there for you...
I... I've tried my best, but you've been so far away...
Even if we can't see eachother or be together, you're in my heart
But only now
No, You've always been by my side
I'm sorry...

Please don't forget me...
Please don't forget who I was...
Then I'll be happy
Thank you...
Hijikata-san
Kikuchiyo is here with me
Knowing that you are watching over me


When I think of him, I'm so overcome with fond memories of love that I can't control my tears...
I've already come so far, thanks to you and Kondou-san
And thanks to Kikuchiyo, too...
I have to get stronger, for Kikuchiyo's sake
With us...

I must stop those tears so my sword won't shake
But I have someone who is always there for me
Hijikata-san am I there for you?
END